

“How to choose the right university”

We have looked at some of the factual differences between studying in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom or the United States. That’s just some of the differences by the way, once you have tried to make your mind about where you want to study, obviously you have to factor in many more criteria.

One of the many variables would be what subject you are planning to study, what subject is going to keep me employed for the next forty years, what subject is going to make me more attractive to the employers alongside. Once you have set your heart on the subject, where will that subject be best taught? If I go engineering in Australia, will it give me equal chances of a job as if I do engineering in the United States? What if I want to work in other countries, what if I want to work all over the world, would it be better to have a degree from the US or a degree from the UK? All these things need to be thought through and looked at.

Another thing that students, especially the elite students, should consider is that nowadays it is almost guaranteed that you will have to do 2 degrees, you will do an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree, you will often do these degrees in 2 different places. Where you go for your graduate degree often depends a lot on where you did your undergraduate degree. So when you are thinking of your undergraduate, you are not just thinking of would I like to spend 4 years in this place; you have to think about how that place will affect the rest of your career and you rest of your university career. You might be also thinking in terms of expenditure if you are also going to do a good graduate degree, you may wish to consider a slightly less expensive undergraduate option where you could still do very well before going onto graduate school.

Those are some of the considerations that I would factor against looking at the 4 countries, so look at the 4 countries and see how these things factor into it. But before even doing that, I think students and their families need to take a step back. This isn’t just a factual survey, this isn’t just a question of looking at the similarities and differences between studying in US, UK, Canada, Australia. It is also about you, it is about your life and your happiness. Students need to be able to take a step back from facts, from what’s the best universities, where does this university fit in on this list, where does it register on that list etc., but think about how they will interact with the universities, how they will experience being there. They need to go to a place where they will be happy and not miserable; they need to go to a place where they will make the best of. For some people, that might be a big city university and a huge metropolis but for other people, it may be a small college.

To decide what’s best for you, you first have to figure out who you are, you have to take a step back from worrying about the 100 best university list or whether I can get a visa for this or how much this one cost; just think who I am and what do I want to get out of this experience, how do I hope the experience will be for me. Once you have done that and discussed with your family, then you can move onto thinking about all those differences and that’s my advice.